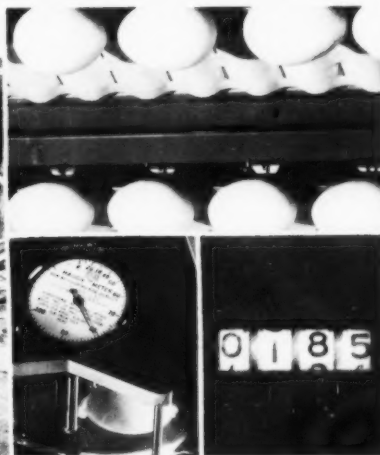




AGRICULTURAL MARKETING



OCTOBER 1967 Vol. 12, No. 10



EGGS AND AUTOMATION

C&MS Personnel Spotlight on New Associate Administrator, C&MS

WINN F. FINNER the new Associate Administrator of Consumer and Marketing Service, has had extensive experience in numerous phases of the marketing service programs for which C&MS is responsible.

He began his career in the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1937 with the Dairy Section of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. He transferred to the Division of Farm Management and Costs in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in November 1939 and ever since, except during World War II, has been associated with the Department's statistical and economic research programs.

Shortly after returning to the Department (he was in the U.S. Navy from March 1943 to March 1946), he shifted to the Bureau of Agricul-

tural Economics, Division of Marketing and Transportation Research. He moved from his position as Deputy Director of the Marketing Economics Division to the Staff Economists Group in September 1963 and was appointed Head of the Staff Economists Group in 1965.

Mr. Finner was on special assignment in Jamaica for the Food and Agriculture Organization in 1961 and was primarily concerned with developing improvements in the marketing of Jamaican agricultural products in domestic and foreign markets.

He is a member of the American Farm Economics Association, is a fellow in the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and received the Department's Distinguished Service Award earlier this year.

IN THIS ISSUE

C&MS Personnel Spotlight— New C&MS Associate Administrator	2
School Lunch Week	3
USDA Redesigns Egg Shield . . .	3
Food Aid for the Needy . . .	4
Quality Check for Better Flour .7	
Automation and Egg Production	8
New Grades For Pork Carcasses	10
Onion Exports	11
Young Artists Illustrate Food Stamp Benefits	12
C&MS Briefs	13
Volunteer Donates Services	14
Pride-in-Packaging	15
More Graded Meat	15
International Standards for Processed Fruits and Vegetables	16

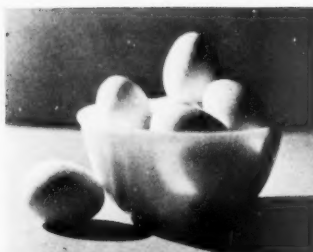
ORVILLE L. FREEMAN
Secretary of Agriculture

S. R. SMITH, Administrator
Consumer and Marketing Service

Editor, James A. Horton
Assistant Editor, Devra L. Massey
Writer-Editor, Bonnie B. White

COVER STORY

You can get more delicious eggs than ever before now that production has been automated. See pages 8 & 9.



Reprint Material

All articles may be reprinted without special permission. Prints of photos may be obtained from Photo Library, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Please order photos by the following negative numbers: Cover, BN-30724; Page 3, BN-28595-a.m.; Page 4, ST-2242-4-a.m.; Page 5, ST-2349-5-a.m., N-48169-a.m., N-52060-a.m.; Page 6, ST-888-17-a.m.; Page 7, ST-2644-6-a.m., ST-2644-15-a.m.; Page 8, BN-30492-a.m., BN-30493-a.m.; Page 9, BN-30494-a.m., ST-2812-10-a.m., BN-860-a.m., BN-30495-a.m.; Page 10, ST-2961-12; Page 12, BN-30532-a.m., BN-30531-a.m.; Page 14, ST-2730-13, ST-2732-2.

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING is published monthly by the Consumer and Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. The printing of this publication was approved by the Bureau of the Budget July 7, 1966. Yearly subscription is \$1.50 domestic, \$2.25 foreign. Single copies 15 cents each. Subscription orders should be sent to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Reference to commercial products and services does not imply endorsement or discrimination by the Department of Agriculture.

National School Lunch Week, October 8-14 . . .

School Lunch Teaches Good Food Habits

With tales of yore as well as current events, students are taught good nutrition by creative teachers.

A CLASS OF adventurous, fifth and sixth graders are enthralled by stories of Spanish explorers searching for the spices of the East. They're not learning history or geography — they're learning good nutrition. Such creative teaching supports National School Lunch Week, proclaimed annually by the President.

This year National School Lunch Week, October 8-14, will call attention to the importance of well-balanced lunches to child welfare and the learning process. The theme is "School Lunch Teaches Good Food Habits," highlighting the fact that the School Lunch Program is not only a school food service program to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children but an educational program as well.

Teamwork is important in accomplishing both program goals. The school food service manager works with teachers at all grade levels to help plan learning experiences that will be reinforced when the child goes into the cafeteria for lunch. At "tasting parties" in elementary schools, for example, new foods make their debut. Later, when a small portion of the food is served at lunch, it is no longer unfamiliar. Games and poster contests related to food heighten children's natural

curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

Using films, displays, and discussions, teachers of teenagers may direct their nutrition education efforts at some of the unique concerns of their students — such as being attractive and deciding on a career. With the nutritionally balanced Type A school lunch menu as a guide, teachers can stress the importance of a good diet for a strong body and clear complexion. They can encourage weight watchers to choose fruit for dessert instead of cake and not to cut calories by skipping lunch. Home economics and business teachers may take field trips with their classes through cafeteria operations to stimulate interest in good nutrition and related professional opportunities.

The child is not the only target for National School Lunch Week activity. For the program to be most effective, what the child learns in school must be made meaningful outside the school lunchroom or classroom. The Week's ceremonies and activities attempt to increase public understanding and awareness of the significance of the program to the child, the family, the farmer, industry and the Nation; a non-profit program that for twenty-one years has "convincingly demonstrated the vital role of good nutrition in the

total educational process of the Nation's children," as President Johnson noted in his National School Lunch Week Proclamation of 1966.

For some of the children, the school lunch is their best and often only real meal of the day. And the most dramatic evidence of the educational significance of the School Lunch Program is in feeding programs for needy children. School officials often report much-improved attendance records, greater participation in sports and in other class activities, and less frequent occurrences of student dizziness and weakness formerly attributed to hunger. For these youngsters, a good lunch makes education possible.

This year some 20 million children will buy lunches at school at low prices made possible by food and cash contributions from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, together with goods and services provided by States and communities. This number includes needy children who will receive lunches free or at reduced prices.

To enhance a child's ability to learn and therefore our Nation's ability to progress, Federal, State and local personnel will continue their vigorous efforts to reach every hungry or nutritionally uneducated child.

USDA REDESIGNS EGG SHIELD

DOES THIS USDA grade shield look familiar? It is the new grade mark which will be used on consumer egg cartons to identify eggs that have been Federal-State graded. According to the Poultry Division of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service, the new mark is

similar to the one now used to identify poultry grades. Packing plants will be using up existing supplies of cartons before having the new grade mark printed on their labels, so you may not immediately see this mark on many brands of eggs.



The Secretary Reports . . .

Where We Stand on FOOD AID

The following are excerpts from two recent speeches of Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman.

THE UNITED STATES today possesses all the physical resources necessary to insure that every person has the opportunity for a full and nutritious diet. We have the food, and we have the most efficient system in the world to distribute it. All that is necessary is to use these resources efficiently and humanely.

To complete the task of reaching every person in this country today with a full and nutritious diet, we must know more than the fact there are still hungry people. We must thoroughly understand the tools we have, the resources, organization and techniques, and the nature of the difficulties we must overcome to complete the job.

The Department of Agriculture operates two programs designed to provide low-income families with more food than they can get with their own resources. One is a program to distribute food commodities directly, and the other is a Food Stamp Program which enables low-income households to buy more food purchasing power with the money normally spent for food.

The Direct Distribution Program began in the early 1930's as a way to share with low-income families the food commodities which the Federal government acquires under surplus removal and price support programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture makes these food commodities available to the States, and the States in turn distribute the food to county and city governments. Those who participate in the program are certified as eligible by local welfare agencies and receive the food commodities at distribution centers provided by local officials.

The Direct Distribution Program

as we know it today started in 1954 when the USDA began to pay the cost of shipping the food, a cost paid until then by the State. The program grew from 155 counties in 1954 to 1200 in 1960.

The number of counties participating has increased sharply and today, including those in the Food Stamp Program, nearly 2,200 provide a food assistance program for low-income families. The value of products currently being provided is about \$5.55 per person per month, and will increase another \$1.50 this month when we begin distributing butter and cheese.

More than 3,000,000 persons in nearly 1,400 counties and cities are now participating in the direct distribution program, and can obtain from it over half of the daily caloric intake recommended for an adequate diet. The current mix of commodities now available will provide on a daily basis, if used, almost 90 percent of the protein, more than 60 percent of the iron, more than enough calcium, thiamine and riboflavin. Very little vitamin A and ascorbic acid are available as these nutrients are found primarily in fresh fruits and vegetables which cannot be easily handled in this kind of program.

We have long recognized the weaknesses of the direct distribution program. Even as we have improved it, we knew it would never be adequate. While 15 commodities provide more variety than 5, (the number distributed in 1960 with a total value of \$1.20 per month—per person) It is difficult for even a highly skilled cook to prepare from 15 commodities the variety of dishes which the average housewife can make from the thousands of food products in today's grocery store. It can be done, but it is not easy.

It is a difficult program to administer, particularly in the sense that it requires us to duplicate the highly developed commercial distribution system.

These and other factors led in 1961 to the Food Stamp Program, as a pilot effort to test whether we could improve the level of food assistance to the poor.

After three years of operation on a pilot basis, President Johnson recommended and the congress passed the Food Stamp Act in 1964.

The Food Stamp Program began with eight pilot projects and an expenditure of a little over \$14 million the first year. It has grown in the fiscal year just ended to cover more than 800 counties and cities, with over 1.8 million people participating.

The purpose was, and is, to help

Official food stamp food lists are printed in Chinese, Spanish, Finnish and English.



FOR THE NEEDY

low-income families supplement their food dollars with enough additional food purchasing power to obtain a better diet.

The Congress assigned to the States and local welfare agencies the task of certifying those who are eligible. States are also responsible for the sale and the security of the food coupons.

The USDA is responsible for authorizing eligible grocery stores where food stamp users can spend the stamps exactly as though they were spending cash. The Federal Treasury redeems the stamps through the commercial banking system.

Both the Food Stamp and Direct Distribution Programs today are supplementing the diets of some 5 million people. Better than two out of every three counties in the U.S.

have one or the other family food assistance program.

Thus, the concept of providing food assistance for low-income families has evolved in three decades from a means of distributing surplus food to a system of increasing the food buying power of low-income families so they can obtain a nutritious diet through the same efficient food distribution system available to all families.

However, establishing the programs and securing the continuing support for them is only the first step toward completing the task of assuring a full and nutritious diet for every person.

Once the programs are available, the second step is to insure they are operated and administered efficiently and effectively, not only at the national level but in the States and



counties where they reach the low-income family.

We must insure that the participating family is doing an effective job in planning meals and preparing the food required for an adequate diet.

Thus, while we have been able to increase by over 1,000 the number of counties which provide a food assistance program, there are still about 800 where no program is available. Obviously, we are not reaching all the people who are hungry.

Only six States, one of which is Mississippi, now provide complete coverage of all counties with the

Food stamp coupons increase food-purchasing power if eligibles shop in retail markets authorized to accept the coupons.



Those eligible for the direct distribution program receive USDA food commodities at distribution centers provided by local officials.



food assistance programs.

We have been able to secure food assistance programs in all but 14 of the 100 lowest per capita income counties. However, among the lowest third per capita income counties and those considered to be poverty stricken, there are 331 counties without these food assistance programs.

In the past two years we have worked closely with OEO on these programs. That agency has underwritten the cost of administration and distribution of food commodities in counties where local tax resources are inadequate. In Mississippi today, through Operation HELP, OEO is financing some or all the administrative costs of direct distribution in 41 counties. Similar arrangements have been made in 61 counties in other States.

OEO recently indicated that it must discontinue its financial assistance for these programs by the end of this year. In order to assure that the food assistance programs continue in these counties, and that we reach needy families in the 331 low-income counties where no program is available, the USDA is prepared to provide the financial aid these counties will need to distribute food commodities to low-income families.

USDA's Technical Action Panels in the States and counties are directed to work with State and local officials to urge and assist those counties which are not participating to set up a food assistance program as quickly as possible. The TAP group consists of the heads of USDA agencies in each State, and its job is to make sure the programs of the Federal government are effectively "reaching out" to the people who need them in rural America.

We estimate that this effort to expand the coverage of the direct distribution program, combined with the growth of the Food Stamp Program planned for this fiscal year, will bring the opportunity for an improved diet to nearly a million more people.

However, we know that making food assistance available does not automatically insure that food reaches the people who need it. This is particularly true of our ex-

periences with the Food Stamp Program.

The low-income household has to be encouraged to join the program, and special help must be provided to many families if they are to use the increased supply of food effectively.

I can illustrate this best with the results of a detailed study of the Food Stamp Program in Washington County, Mississippi. This is a county in the Mississippi delta which has an average per capita income of \$1,094 and where nearly 3 out of 10 families have incomes too low to provide adequate food.

Over half the Washington County families which are eligible are not participating. They generally live in towns. They are likely to be receiving welfare payments, and the size of the household is either small, from one to three, or very large with incomes near the upper limits of program eligibility.

Nearly seven out of ten of the eligible urban households are not participating. (In contrast, nearly seven out of ten of the rural households eligible for food stamps are participating in the program.)

When families were asked why they did not participate, most said that the stamps cost too much or that they did not have enough money.

However, we found that nine out of ten of these families actually spent more money — in some cases, substantially more — than they would have had to pay for stamps.

Both statements are consistent and can be understood in relation to the way low-income families earn money and buy food. Money is earned in small amounts and food is purchased mostly as it is needed. Thus, while the cost of a particular food item is always known, families generally are unaware of how much they spend over a month for food.

Thus, the real task we face in getting more people to participate in the Food Stamp Program is to show the low-income family that food stamps will help them buy more food and more of the items they need for the family.

The only effective way is to work directly and personally with low-in-

come families to explain the program and to show them how they can benefit directly from it.

A number of changes have been made in the Food Stamp Program which are now in effect in Mississippi, and which are now being extended to other States as rapidly as possible.

These changes include: 1) Reducing the investment price for food stamps in the lowest income category from \$2 per person per month to 50 cents. No family in this category will pay more than \$3, and where families cannot pay even this amount, the counties will be expected to provide the payment from local sources. 2) Dropping the purchase price for all persons and families by half in the first month they participate. 3) Hiring people who live in low-income neighborhoods to serve as "program aides" to assist families to join the program and to work with them to correct problems that may develop as soon as they occur. 4) Setting up nutritional education programs for low-income families in every county. 5) Increasing the number of food stamp advisory offices. 6) Making available Federal financial assistance to start a commodity distribution program for counties with inadequate tax resources.

I believe these changes and modifications represent the kind of experimentation which must go into any project which has so massive and difficult an objective as insuring that every person has the opportunity for a full and nutritious diet.





New Quality Check for Better Flour

THE CASE OF THE WATERY GRAVY

C&MS has adopted a new test so that recipients of USDA-donated flour can be assured of consistently high quality.

By Edward B. Liebe

Technician lowers flour and distilled water mixture into boiling water bath.

WHAT DOES THE U.S. Department of Agriculture do when flour purchased for domestic food programs and for export meets Government specifications — yet does not bake properly?

This perplexing question arose recently when schools participating in the National School Lunch Program reported that the flour they were getting would, at best, make only a poor gravy and was inferior in baking quality.

The problem was turned over to the Grain Division of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service which is charged with the responsibility of testing flour purchased by USDA and certifying that it meets all of the chemical requirements of Government purchase specifications.

Samples of the questionable flour were sent in by schools to the Grain Division's testing laboratories at the Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Md. All samples met or exceeded USDA specifications. But home economists at the testing laboratories confirmed that none of the samples would properly thicken gravy. Baking quality was also affected.

Further tests run on the samples revealed, however, that the flour contained a high degree of enzyme (alpha-amylase) activity, which can result from adding excessive malt to

wheat flour or the milling of sprout-damaged wheat. As a result of these tests, it became apparent that an additional quality factor would have to be included in flour purchase specifications.

Having isolated the cause of the difficulty, the Grain Division next sought a rapid method for measuring the quantity of alpha-amylase activity, and turned to a method developed by a Swedish scientist.

The method adopted is commonly referred to as the *falling number test*. The test apparatus is relatively simple in design, consisting of an electric hot plate, water bath, precision-made test tube, and a stirrer.

The test, too, is quite simple, and requires little laboratory time:

Flour is weighed into the test tube and distilled water is added. The tube is stoppered, shaken vigorously and then lowered into the boiling-water bath. A timer is started and the sample is stirred with an up and down stroke for 55 seconds. The stirrer is released at its highest position and allowed to fall freely through the sample. When the stirrer has dropped a predetermined distance, the timer is automatically stopped. The total number of seconds from the time the sample is immersed in the boiling-water bath until the stirrer has fallen the prescribed distance, is the falling num-

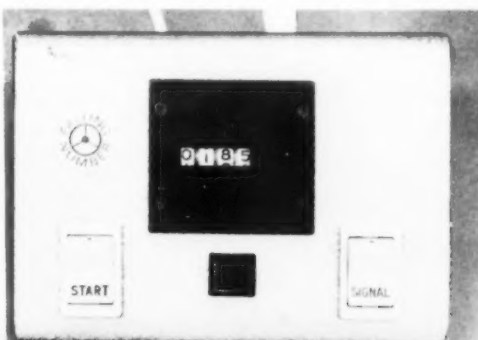
ber value for that sample.

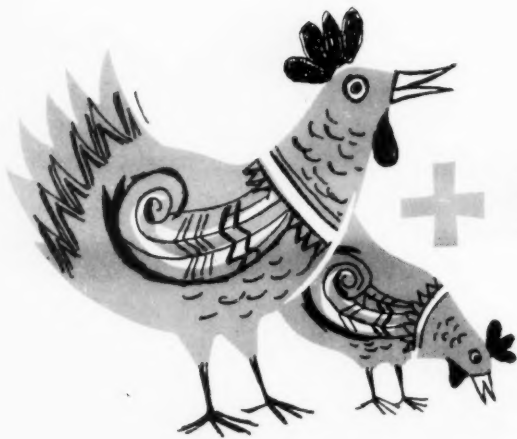
Flour with too little as well as too much alpha-amylase activity results in poor performance. But an adequate amount of alpha-amylase activity is indispensable for good breadmaking. The amylase activity in flour purchased by USDA, therefore, must fall within a precise range before it will be accepted. As a result of extensive tests, USDA has adopted, in addition to existing requirements, a falling number range of 200-300 for bread flour and 175-350 for all-purpose flour in its procurement specifications.

As a result of the falling number test and the many other quality checks performed by the Grain Division, recipients of USDA-donated flour can now be assured of getting a consistently high quality product.

The author is Acting Chief, Standardization Branch, Grain Division, C&MS, USDA.

The falling number value for the sample appears here.





AUTOMATION



FRESH, TOP-QUALITY



The large egg production operation shown above has 35,000 layers. The hens enter the nests (against wall to the right) to lay their eggs. The nests have slanted floors, so that as soon as the egg is laid, it rolls into a trough which leads to a conveyor belt. The belt carries the egg to a central collection room.

FRIED SCRAMBLED OR poached . . . eggs in any form are a favorite food of U.S. consumers. In 1966, they ate enough eggs to account for 313 for each man, woman, and child in the civilian population. In 1967, the U.S. Department of Agriculture expects the percapita consumption to rise to about 320.

Egg production in 1966 totaled approximately 184 million cases — 30 dozen eggs in each case. That's a lot of eggs.

There have been striking shifts in the location of egg production. For instance, Georgia has moved up from ninth place in 1960 to second place now.

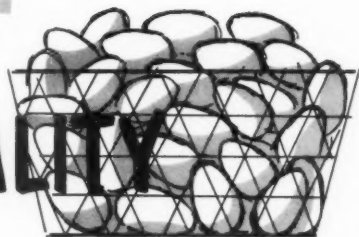
Far from the "pin money" operation of yesterday, egg production today is big business. Using the latest automated techniques, some large packers turn out 60,000 to 80,000 cases each month.

A large modern farm operation may involve from 35,000 to 100,000

This worker places the eggs into trays as they arrive in the collection room.



QUALITY



An automatic egg-weighing machine determines the size by weight. Large and Medium are the most common sizes.

layer hens. In such operations, eggs are automatically "collected" from the nests and moved by conveyor belt to a central collection room, which is usually cooled to help maintain top quality in the eggs.

The eggs are then weighed automatically and separated according to size. In many modern plants, experienced USDA Consumer and Marketing Service personnel supervise the procedures for checking egg quality as part of USDA's voluntary fee-for-service grading program. The eggs, on a conveyor, pass over specially designed lights which enable the grader to determine interior quality.

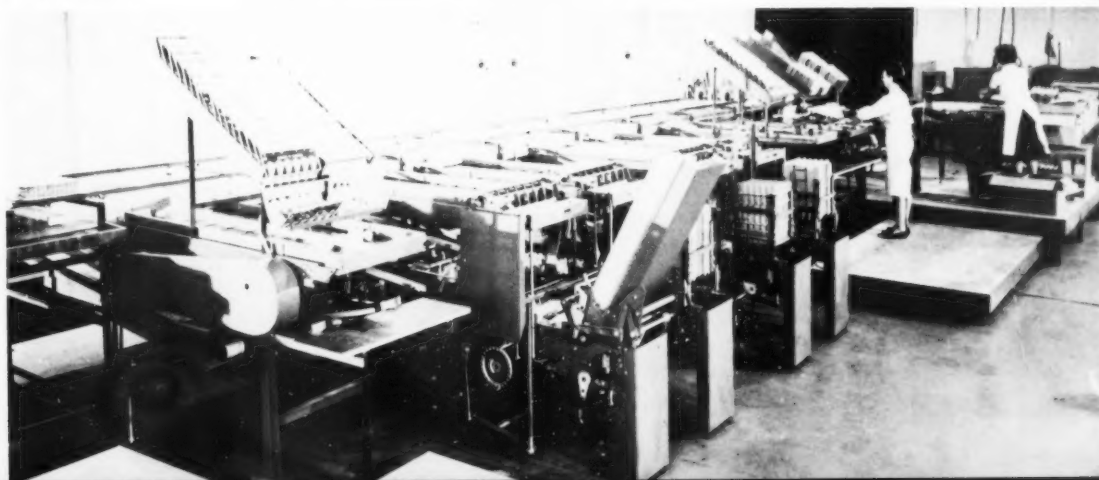
The graded eggs are packed in cartons by automatic equipment and are moved to a cooled storage room to await transportation to a retail outlet.

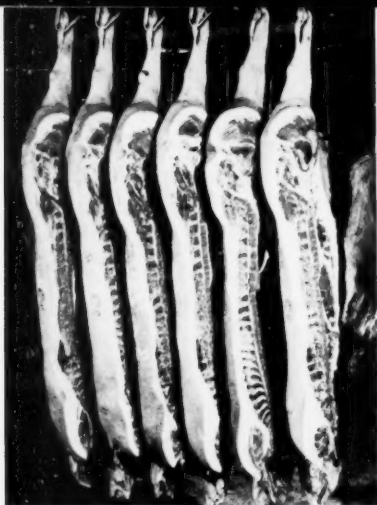
These fast, automated techniques, coupled with careful grading by C&MS employees, guarantee consumers a top-quality product.



C&MS graders, like this one, examine eggs for quality. He uses a micrometer in a break-out test to measure the weight of the thick white for a special quality control program. Eggs processed under this program are labeled Fresh Fancy or Grade AA.

The automatic packaging equipment drops six eggs at a time into a carton; "fingers" gently lower the eggs into place.





By Peter J. Williams

SUPERIOR PORK CARCASSES WOULD GET NEW NO. 1 GRADE

Proposed revision of U.S. standards for grades of pork carcasses calls for meatier carcasses—reflects progress of swine industry in meeting desires for high quality, lean cuts.

REVISED standards for pork carcasses are being proposed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

And, say C&MS livestock technicians who are responsible for developing and issuing grade standards for livestock and meat, this proposal is in a way quite a tribute to the swine industry. It is testimony to the tremendous progress in swine improvement made by the industry since the last revision of the standards in 1955.

Responding to consumers' desire for high-quality, lean pork, producers have developed and have been marketing a large number of hogs that overshoot the current requirements for the U.S. No. 1 grade.

That's the reason for the major feature of the proposed new standards—a new U.S. No. 1 grade, specifically for those superior carcasses now being produced in increasing numbers. These are the "meat-type" carcasses that have acceptable quality of lean meat, but relatively little backfat. They yield a large proportion of their carcass weight in the four major wholesale cuts—hams, loins, picnics, and Boston butts—that make up nearly two-thirds of the value of a pork carcass.

The proposed new standards have no minimum backfat requirement for the U.S. No. 1 grade as do the present standards. The proposal provides three lower numerical grades, U.S. No. 2, 3, and 4, for carcasses with varying degrees of back-

fat, the major factor influencing carcass yields. These three lower numerical grades would have requirements quite similar to those now in effect for the present U.S. No. 1, 2, and 3 grades.

All the numerical grades would, as at present, be restricted to carcasses which have acceptable quality of lean meat. The difference between these numerical grades is entirely one of yield of the four lean cuts. For carcasses with low quality of lean—including lean that is soft and watery—the proposal calls for only one grade—U.S. Medium. The present Cull grade would be dropped.

When the current standards were developed, a minimum backfat thickness requirement was included for the U.S. No. 1 grade. In the intervening years, however, producers have succeeded, through selective breeding, in producing hogs with enough finish to have acceptable quality lean but with very little backfat. Since backfat is the major factor affecting yield—the other important factor is muscling—carcasses from these hogs yield a large percentage of their weight in the high-value wholesale cuts.

This progress is reflected in the proposed revision of standards for pork carcasses. U.S. No. 1 carcasses, under the proposal, would be expected to yield more than 53 percent of their weight in the major closely trimmed lean cuts—hams, loins, picnics, and butts. The yield for U.S. No. 2 would be between 50

and 53 percent; for U.S. No. 3, it would be between 47 and 50 percent; and for U.S. No. 4 it would be below 47 percent. The current U.S. No. 1 grade calls for a carcass yield of more than 50 percent and requirements for the other numerical grades are similarly about 3 percent below those now being proposed.

Other proposed changes in the standards would spell out more clearly methods for determining the factors of grade, including those for adjusting grade on the basis of off-setting factors of backfat measurement and muscling characteristics.

The proposed new standards, would provide a more precise measure of true market value than those now in use. If these standards are adopted, similar changes are planned for the standards for slaughter swine. Producers thus would have a new goal to shoot at in producing pork to meet consumer desires—and industry would have a better pricing and marketing tool.

Copies of the proposed revision of U.S. Standards for Pork Carcasses may be obtained from the Livestock Division, Consumer and Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

The author is a marketing specialist, Standardization Branch, Livestock Division, C&MS, USDA.

Drying the tears . . .

SOUTH TEXAS ONION EXPORTS BRING NEW LIFE TO MARKET

By David B. Fitz

FAST ACTION BY the South Texas onion industry and co-operating groups opened a new export outlet for Texas onions in 1967, and a sagging market developed new life just when prospects for a successful marketing season looked hopeless.

With a big supply of onions on hand, growers and shippers welcomed the idea of moving into the export market.

Feasibility of exporting onions to Europe was proposed from two separate sources. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that Europe was having trouble getting onions from traditional suppliers and that doors were being opened wider for imports.

About the same time, three Texans — two representing the Texas Farm Bureau and one with the Texas Valley Citrus Committee — went to Europe to investigate the market potential for Texas commodities. Talking with European buyers, they learned of Europe's need for onions, so they began to take orders.

Back in Texas the manager of the Federal marketing order—as a service to the South Texas onion industry—set about contacting sellers to accumulate supplies of onions of the particular grades and sizes needed to fill the European orders. He also scheduled ships for loading.

One of the first orders to be filled was for 36,142 fifty-pound bags, loaded aboard ship in Brownsville, Texas, for delivery to Rotterdam and Hamburg. This shipload sold at \$1.68 per bag (f.o.b. McAllen, Texas) — some 25 to 40 cents higher than prices had been running. New confidence developed in the South Texas onion market as more orders came. Prices moved up to \$1.75 to \$2.00 per bag.

At least 273,000 bags were shipped by 12 South Texas shippers during the season. Most orders were for the top sizes of medium yellow

Granex onions. The onions were distributed to retail markets in many parts of Northern and Western Europe.

More onions could have been sold had transportation been available. Several firm orders were turned down for lack of shipping space, and those that were filled were loaded at ports all the way from Brownsville to New York.

One 20,000-bag order for small onions — preferred by many European consumers — could not be filled. The marketing order size requirements were amended to permit export of the smaller onions, but not enough were available at the time to fill the order.

Through provisions of the marketing order, shipment of high quality onions was assured. All of the exported onions were examined by Federal-State inspectors, under supervision of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service, to ensure that they met quality and size standards of the marketing order. Shippers took care in loading to avoid injury and to provide adequate ventilation.

A Texas agricultural extension specialist met the first shipload arriving in Rotterdam and reported that the onions were in excellent condition. Buyers, he said, were well pleased. He pointed out that at

The author is officer-in-charge of the McAllen, Texas, marketing field office, Fruit and Vegetable Division, C&MS, USDA.

least one other order for 15,000 bags came as a direct result of the rapid acceptance by European consumers of the first shipment. Onions to fill this other order—loaded aboard ship at Houston, Texas, and destined for Rotterdam—sold at the equivalent of \$1.95 per bag (f.o.b. sheds in the Winter Garden area of South Texas).

South Texas shippers hope this year's exports have opened the door for future trade with Europe. They know that holding the market will partly depend upon whether European customers learn to like the sweet, mild-flavored Texas onions as well as the hot type they have known so long.

They know, too, that retaining the European market will require shipment of a carefully sized, quality product. And a helpful tool for accomplishing that is their Federal marketing order.

Though the lasting effects are yet to be seen, most South Texas growers are sure that the 1967 market would have been seriously depressed without the exports. And they hope the new life will continue.

The July 8 issue of the *Fruit Trades' Journal*, published in London, England, carried a report which attests to the popularity of the Texas onions shipped to Europe this year. Entitled "Steady Onion Demand, Texan preferred," it states: "Onion market is fairly steady, with balances of Egyptian being picked up owing to the strongness of taste."

"A small supply from Malta is also required, but from Spain the *Babosa* is as limp as a gored *Matador*. *Lirias* from that country, particularly the fours, are in excellent condition and have picked up steadily. Much interest, however, is displayed in the smaller arrivals from Texas, which are a rapid seller."



aspiring artists illustrate food stamp benefits

YOU MAY CALL them junior Rembrandts or Michelangelos. They are Buffalo, N.Y., elementary school youngsters who recently entered a Food Stamp Program poster contest sponsored by the local Urban League to help increase public understanding of the program.

Approximately 60 children displayed their artistic as well as imaginative credentials showing how the

Food Stamp Program can improve the diets of low-income families by increasing their food buying power.

A colorful poster submitted by a bright sixth grade miss took first prize (a \$25 U.S. Savings Bond). She drew a cornucopia spilling over a tempting variety of fruit, with a large lettered message urging: "Use Government Stamps . . . Good Fruit for Good Health."

The second prize (a \$10 savings account) was taken by a 6th grade lad whose poster showed an appetizing assortment of food and read: "Stretch Your Food Dollar."

Third place (another \$10 savings account) went to a seventh grader.

Another seventh grader captured the fourth place prize (\$5.00). Honorable mention letters went to five runner-up winners.

Prizes were donated by local and nearby banks which issue food stamps, along with a personal donation by John Cobb of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service in Buffalo.

In commenting on the purpose of the contest, the Urban League's Nancy Randolph said: "We, of

course, hope it encourages greater participation in the stamp program." She added: "There are many low income families in this area who would greatly benefit through it. This contest is an excellent way to get people acquainted with the program."

There is no direct way to gauge the effect of the contest on food stamp participation. However, Mr. Cobb pointed out that participation in the Buffalo area reached its peak just after the contest was completed; and during a period when such figures usually tend to be lower because of greater seasonal employment.

Plans call for the posters to be displayed in various prominent downtown Buffalo locations, including the building where recipients may be certified to take part in the Food Stamp Program. It may not be quite the Louvre or the Metropolitan Museum of Art, but they'll surely capture the eyes of interested passers-by . . . and maybe attract more low-income people who need the benefits of the Food Stamp Program.



CONSUMER AND MARKETING BRIEFS

Selected short items on C&MS activities in consumer protection, marketing services, market regulation, and consumer food programs.

PLENTIFUL FOODS FOR OCTOBER

Brisk October days will afford housewives an excellent variety of plentiful foods. The Consumer and Marketing Service's list includes broiler-fryers, potatoes, orange juice, apples, rice, and in several areas of the country there'll be generous supplies of fresh and frozen shrimp.

The 1966-67 pack of Florida frozen concentrated orange juice is a record, totaling 127.6 million gallons. Also, there are big stocks of chilled as well as single strength orange juice on hand.

There's a big apple crop this year, and the industry has designated the week of October 12-21 as National Apple Week.

Supplies of potatoes from the fall crop are slightly larger than a year ago, and 15% greater than the recent 5-year average. In addition to these heavy supplies, delayed harvest of the late summer crop will swell the total.

Always-popular broiler-fryers will sparkle fall appetites, too, as October marketings will be larger than a year earlier.

Rice production has rung up a new record this year, and that industry will again celebrate its annual Harvest Rice Festival.

INDIANS RECEIVE NUTRITION EDUCATION

Needy Indians in Montana are getting tips on how to use foods donated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In the first half of this year, 180 Indians on the Northern Cheyenne and 550 on the Rocky Boy Reservations attended food demonstrations conducted by State and local people in Montana.

In addition, numerous radio and newspaper releases on commodity

usage were pinpointed to reach recipients on all reservations in the State. Recipes were supplied to Head Start cooks. And, the State Extension Agency and the Public Health Department helped teach nutrition education to the Community OEO and Neighborhood Aids for home visits to the Rocky Boy Reservation.

DIAL-A-MARKET

Kansas livestock producers can now get "instant" market news.

They need only dial the Dodge City livestock market news office, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to get official livestock and dressed meat marketing information via a recently-installed telephone tape recording device.

USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service also provides this telephone market news service in northern Colorado; Clovis, N. Mex.; Ames, Iowa; and Omaha, Nebr. These carry livestock, meat, and grain market news reports.

Dial-A-Market recordings have proven very popular with all segments of the livestock and meat industry. They can get a short round-up of the slaughter livestock, meat trade, and feeder cattle news at any time — day or night.

Here is how the system works: the market news reporter records the market summary on tape several times each market day. When the appropriate telephone number is dialed, the recorder plays back the information. The last report on Fridays summarizes the week's trading and remains the same until revised on Monday.

The expense for the Dial-A-Market recording service is paid by various trade associations and commercial business firms.

FOOD TIPS

-from USDA's Consumer
and Marketing Service

THE CONSUMER WON'T BE SKINNED

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service recently denied approval of a product labeled "Skinless, Boneless, Cooked Turkey Breast." The product contained turkey skin that had been ground up and mixed throughout the product. It was determined that the term "skinless" could not be used since the consumer would undoubtedly assume the product was free of skin.

* * *

TRY THIS GOOD BEEF ROAST

Want a flavorful beef roast that's usually a little less expensive than a rib roast? Try a *rump roast*. If it's USDA Prime, Choice, or Good (look for the shield-shaped USDA grade mark to be sure) it can be oven-roasted like a rib. For easier carving, the rump roast can be boned and rolled.

Volunteer Donates Services to Low-Income Families



Mrs. Sophie Leavitt's recorded radio messages are among a variety of approaches USDA is using to help the needy make better use of USDA food aid.

NEW RADIO messages to help low-income people make better use of USDA food aid have been produced with the help of a plain-talking lady volunteer from Palm Beach, Florida. Mrs. Sophie Leavitt, a former teacher who has raised three children of her own and is now a grandmother, has a special flair for talking to other women about eating well on a low budget.

Her radio talks are based on a lifelong pursuit of practical knowledge about food — what and how to buy, how to prepare, how to stretch the food budget. She's shopped in food markets all over the world, learning how others buy and what they eat.

For three years she has been working with people who get USDA donated food in West Palm Beach, Florida, and has visited many homes, including those of migrant farm workers. She gives simple demonstrations at the distribution center on using donated foods, talks on the radio and has been on television.

Last summer she came to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington to donate her services in making recordings of some of her special messages to low-income families — so they can be used as public service broadcasts in other areas

of the country. They have been made into two records — one for broadcast in areas with the Food Stamp Program and another for use in areas with the Family Food Donation Program.

This is one of a variety of approaches USDA is using to help low income people get better diets through its food programs. In a number of Mississippi counties, neighborhood people have been hired as program aides to call on other low-income families to explain USDA food help and how the family can eat better. It is hoped that this plan can be extended. In other areas Extension agents, Public Health nurses, local nutritionists and teachers are presenting courses in food buying and management for low-income homemakers. As a guide to setting up such a course the USDA has published "Food for Thrifty Families," which includes training materials for leaders along with recipe leaflets for families using food stamps or donated foods.

For more information on educational materials for the food help programs write to the Information Division, Consumer and Marketing Service, Washington, D.C. 20250 or contact one of the following field offices:

*Information Division, C&MS,
USDA
1795 Peachtree Road, N.E.,
Room 203
Atlanta, Georgia 30309
Phone: 404-526-5154*

*Information Division, C&MS,
USDA
536 S. Clark Street, 1st Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60605
Phone: 312-353-6670*

*Information Division, C&MS,
USDA
Merchandise Mart
500 S. Ervay Street, Room 3-107
Dallas, Texas 75201
Phone: 214-749-3331*

*Information Division, C&MS,
USDA
346 Broadway
New York, New York 10013
Phone: 212-264-1114*

*Information Division, C&MS,
USDA
630 Sansome Street, Room 702
San Francisco, California 94111
Phone: 415-556-6164*

PRODUCEMEN PROFIT FROM PRIDE-IN-PACKAGING

P RIDE-IN-PACKAGING is paying off in the form of greater profits for growers of fruits and vegetables in Arkansas, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri, a U.S. Department of Agriculture marketing representative reports.

Gene Paulson—fruit and vegetable market reporter with USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service in Kansas City—observed during the 1967 season that growers in practically all areas where produce is grown in these States were packing better quality fruits and vegetables and using better containers.

In past years, he says, growers and shippers often put their poor quality produce in the bottom of containers, topping the packages with good quality produce. Buyers never knew what they were getting. But this year the buyers were beginning to rely on the grower's word because the products were being graded uni-

formly and labeled by grade, such as "No. 1" or "No. 2."

New methods of packaging, Paulson reports, are helping to reduce bruising of produce and are stimulating sales. For instance, in Arkansas this season growers began packing tomatoes in 20-pound cartons, strawberries in 12-pint flats, and peaches in 1/2- or 3/4-bushel cartons and wire-bound crates. Containers were attractive and marked as to grade.

By contrast, Arkansas growers in past years had packed tomatoes and peaches in 1/2-bushel and bushel baskets. Produce was often bruised and in bad condition when received on the market.

Paulson says sweet corn packaging also changed considerably during the season. Growers switched from using burlap and open-mesh sacks to wire-bound crates, with the ears of sweet corn packed uniformly.

And here's a testimonial to *pride-in-packaging* — related to Paulson by a farmer who finally learned his lesson after 20 years of farming:

"I used to bring my tomatoes to market and had a hard time selling them. Fact is, sometimes I had to take them back home. But this year I started grading them . . . separating them between a good quality pack and a poor-ordinary quality pack and marking them as such.

"At first, it was slow selling them. But as the season has progressed, there's been a big change. Now big firms send trucks to my farm to get my produce. Not only that, but I get almost as much for my No. 2-grade produce as I used to get for my whole pack. My No. 1's now bring me a premium.

"I didn't know that putting up good packages could make so much difference in selling and in the prices I get for my produce!"

Meat Eaters' Delight— More Graded Meat at Less Cost

In fiscal '67, more meat was graded and with more efficiency than ever before.

WHILE Americans were gobbling up record amounts of meat during the past year, U.S. Department of Agriculture meat graders were hanging up new records, too.

They not only graded more meat than ever before — a total of 15.4 billion pounds — but did so with a greater degree of efficiency than ever before. They graded nearly 50 percent more meat, per man, than they did four years ago.

Since the meat grading service, conducted by USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service, is paid for by the users of the service, this increase in efficiency meant savings to the meat industry — and thus to consumers also.

During the 1967 fiscal year, consumers found an additional 2.1 billion pounds of meat bearing the familiar USDA Prime, Choice, or

Good grade shield or — in the case of institutional buyers — the "Accepted as Specified" stamp through which they were assured that their purchases met their exact requirements.

Most of the increase in grading was in beef — the favorite meat of most Americans. Beef graded totaled nearly 13 billion pounds — more than in any previous year including the war years when meat grading was compulsory under price control programs.

The large increase in meat grading, C&MS reports, was handled with a minimum increase in number of graders. Through careful scheduling of their time and the co-operation of the meat industry, the graders were able to grade an average of 29 million pounds of meat, per man, last year. In 1963, the average grader was able to handle only 19.6 million pounds of meat a

year. At the 1963 rate, the grading cost for last year's 15 billion pounds would have been nearly \$4 million more than it actually was.

Another gainer during fiscal year 1967 was the beef-yield grading program. Yield grades, developed in response to consumers rising aversion to excess fat, provide an accurate index of the amount of salable beef that can be cut from a carcass. The yield grading program has been in use only two years, but the volume of beef yield graded last year was nearly double that for the previous year, rising from 342 million pounds to 619 million pounds.

This increasing interest in and use of yield grades, say C&MS graders, should stimulate production of more high quality cattle with a minimum of excess fat. Graders report they are already seeing more leaner Prime and Choice carcasses in meat coolers around the Nation.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
DIVISION OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20402

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

INTERNATIONAL GROUP DRAFTS FOOD STANDARDS

INTERNATIONAL food standards for several processed fruits and vegetables moved an important notch closer to adoption this summer, when delegates from the United States and 17 other countries and observers from four nongovernmental international organizations met in Washington D.C., June 19-23 1967.

These food standards are designed to aid in the protection of the consumer's health and facilitate world trade. They will help assure consumers that foods of the same kind from different countries meet uniform minimum requirements for hygiene, composition, and labeling.

Fitzhugh L. Southerland, Deputy Director of the Fruit and Vegetable Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service, served as chairman of the international committee on processed fruits and vegetables which considered drafts of proposed standards for ten canned fruits and vegetables.

The committee is one of several operating under the auspices of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, an international body established by the Food and Agriculture Organiza-

tion (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) for the purpose of developing international standards for foods. Any country who is a member of FAO or WHO

*Committee progresses
toward standards
for processed fruits
and vegetables
to facilitate
world trade
and protect
the health
of the consumer.*

is entitled to participate in developing the standards.

The committee usually meets once each year. The June meeting in Washington was its fourth ses-

sion. At that meeting, delegates from the various countries considered and revised drafts of international standards for canned sweet corn, applesauce, tomatoes, green and wax beans, peaches, grapefruit, asparagus, pineapple, mushrooms, and green garden peas. The committee is currently working on drafts of standards for 17 additional processed fruits and vegetables. These will be considered by the committee at future meetings.

The process of drawing up and adopting Codex standards involves ten procedural steps. At the recent meeting of the Codex committee, standards for canned sweet corn, applesauce, tomatoes, green and wax beans, peaches, and grapefruit were considered at Step 7, and were advanced to Step 8 in the *Codex Procedure for Elaboration of Standards*. These standards will next be submitted to the Codex Alimentarius Commission with recommendation that they be adopted as provisional standards and sent to member countries for acceptance. When enough countries formally accept the provisional standards, they will be published in the Codex Alimentarius as a worldwide Codex standard.

